GRANTEE ABSTRACT

Ohio

OHIO'S REFORM AGENDA BUILDS UPON ITS
successes to date and provides ambitious goals and
strategies to increase access to high-quality services in
order to ensure that children with high needs enter school
with the skills they need to succeed in kindergarten and
beyond. In 2011, nearly 75 percent of the 50,000 children
with high needs screened by Ohio's Kindergarten
Readiness Assessment – Literacy (KRA-L) were identified
to need intense or targeted literacy instruction. While the
state has made some progress in KRA-L results during the
past five years, children with high needs continue to perform
poorly and the readiness gap remains wide. Ohio has
established a focused set of strategies to close this
readiness gap. By 2015, through activities already
underway as well as those outlined in its application,
Ohio will

- increase access to high-quality experiences for more
  than 37,000 children with high needs;

- increase the number of highly rated programs available
  to children with high needs by nearly 1,300; and

- improve school readiness outcomes for high-needs
  children by 5 percent.

Ohio has put in place a strong management infrastructure
and interagency coordination process, and has established
a direct point of accountability for early learning. This
infrastructure is coupled with strong support from Ohio's
business and early learning stakeholders.

Ohio has already adopted a tiered quality rating and
improvement system (TQRIS), called Step Up to Quality
(SUTQ), for child care programs. The RTT-ELC grant will
enable Ohio to expand SUTQ to all types of early learning
and development programs, including public district
preschool programs and family child care programs. Ohio
will accomplish its goals of increased numbers of highly
rated programs by including all publicly funded programs in
SUTQ; moving currently rated programs to higher tiers; and

Applicant
Office of the Governor,
State of Ohio

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Ohio Department of
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Total Federal Award
$69,993,362

Grant Period
January 1, 2012 –
December 31, 2015

The Race to the Top – Early
Learning Challenge (RTT-
ELC) discretionary grant
program supports states in
building statewide systems
that raise the quality of early
learning and development
programs and increase
access to high-quality
programs for children with
high needs, so that all
children enter kindergarten
ready to succeed.

Information in this abstract is
drawn from the state's RTT-
ELC grant application.

using incentives for programs to maintain, and for parents to select, high-quality care for their children.

Ohio will improve child outcomes for all children, especially children with high needs, by expanding and implementing early learning and development standards in the essential domains of school readiness, and by developing a new assessment system that will include learning progressions and benchmarks.

Ohio will improve the early childhood workforce by aligning its Core Competencies and Knowledge Framework with postsecondary coursework and degrees; distributing and providing training on a competency instructor guide; and developing recommendations for a streamlined progression of credentials and degrees for early childhood education.

Ohio will partner with Maryland to develop a comprehensive assessment system including a new kindergarten entry assessment and pre-kindergarten and kindergarten formative assessments in all domains of school readiness. Ohio will expand its early learning data systems to facilitate longitudinal data analysis of child outcomes tied to the quality of early learning and development programs.

Ohio addressed the following Focused Investment Areas in its application:

Early Learning and Development Standards

(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality early learning and development standards. Ohio has nationally recognized Infant and Toddlers Guidelines and recently updated pre-kindergarten Content Standards in four content areas. Ohio will fully align and integrate its birth to kindergarten entry standards to reflect all domains of development and readiness.

Comprehensive Assessment System

(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of comprehensive assessment systems. Ohio has a strong comprehensive assessment system throughout all types of early learning and development programs and will build upon this system by partnering with Maryland to develop a pre-kindergarten to kindergarten formative assessment and kindergarten entry assessment, to document the progress being made by children, particularly by children with high needs participating in state programs.

Establish Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

(D)(1) Developing a workforce knowledge and competency framework and a progression of credentials. Ohio has a Core Knowledge and Competency Framework, but will use this grant to make it fully integrated and aligned with all professional development for early childhood educators.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment

(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry. Ohio will leverage its six years of experience with a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment and 10 years of experience from the state of Maryland to develop a new kindergarten entry assessment that will be expanded to reflect all domains of readiness based on Ohio's and Maryland's expanded, comprehensive standards. The new assessment will give teachers

better information to develop instructional practices and the state more information to understand the performance of programs.

Build or Enhance Data Systems

(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies. Ohio will develop a coordinated data system that is interoperable with its statewide longitudinal data system and that facilitates the exchange of data by using standard data formats and definitions.

Ohio has 338,800 children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families. The state reports that it is leveraging $96,835,430 in other funding sources to support this effort.